

UNIT 2- HINDUISM



2.1 Introduction to Hinduism

Hinduism

*There is only one God,
but endless are his
aspects and endless
are his names. Call
him by any name and
worship him in any
aspect that pleases
you, you are sure to
see him* Shri Ramakrishna, quoted in
Prabhavananda (1836-1886)



Intro to Hinduism

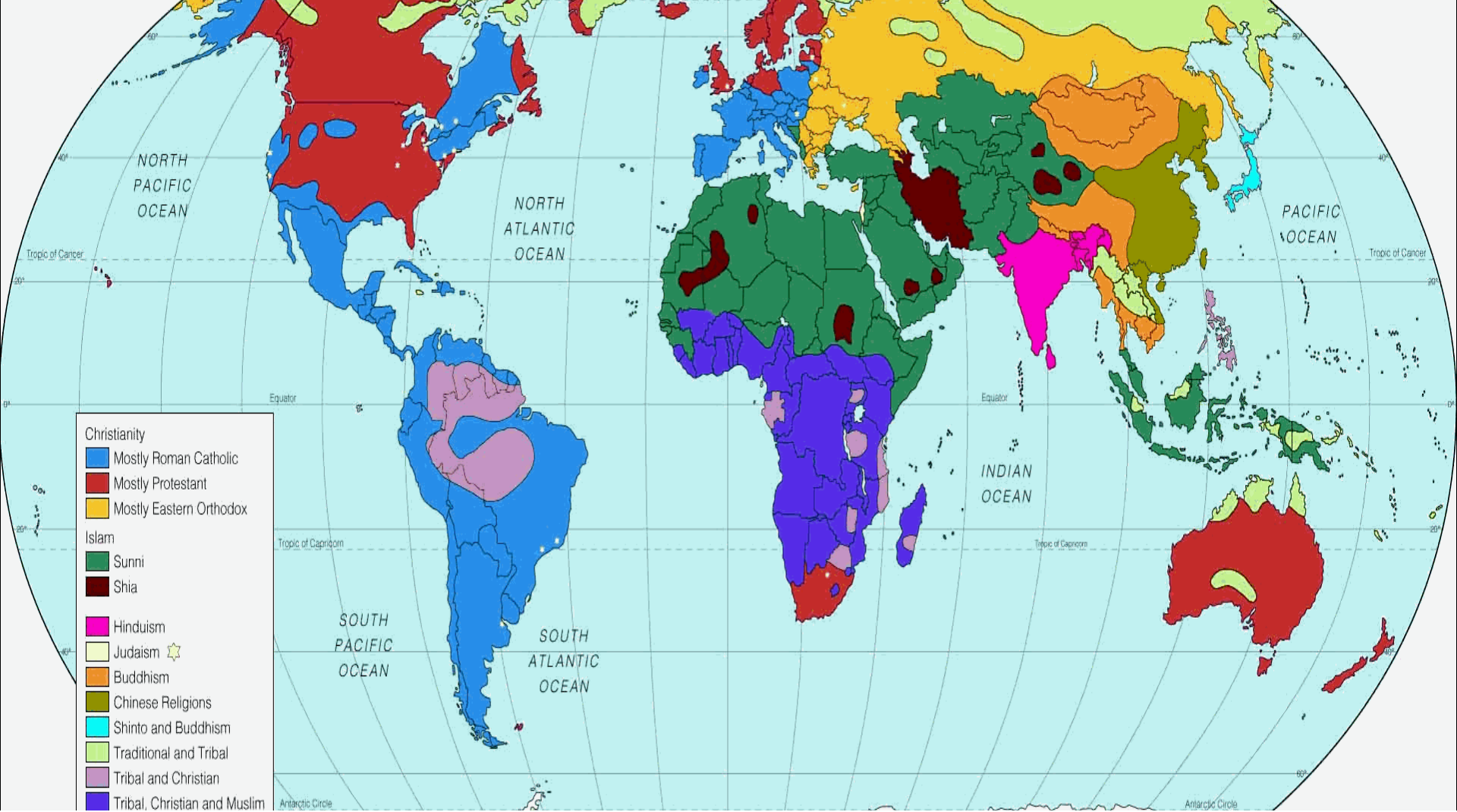
- Hinduism is the religion of the majority of people in India
- It also exists among significant populations outside of the sub continent and has over 900 million adherents worldwide.



Intro to Hinduism

- In some ways Hinduism is the oldest living religion in the world.
- Unlike most other religions, Hinduism has no single founder, no single scripture, and no commonly agreed set of teachings





Intro to Hinduism

- Throughout its extensive history, there have been many key figures teaching different philosophies and writing numerous books.
- For these reasons, writers often refer to Hinduism as 'a way of life' or 'a family of religions' rather than a single religion.

Intro to Hinduism

- The foundation of Hinduism however, was probably laid by two groups of people:
 - The Indus Valley Civilization
 - Arrival of the Aryans
- Group 1 - Indus Valley
Group 2 - Aryans

Origins

Indus Valley Civilization

Hinduism

Figure 4.1

Hinduism is the product of the various peoples who have occupied India through time.



ORIGINS

Unlike other religious traditions, for

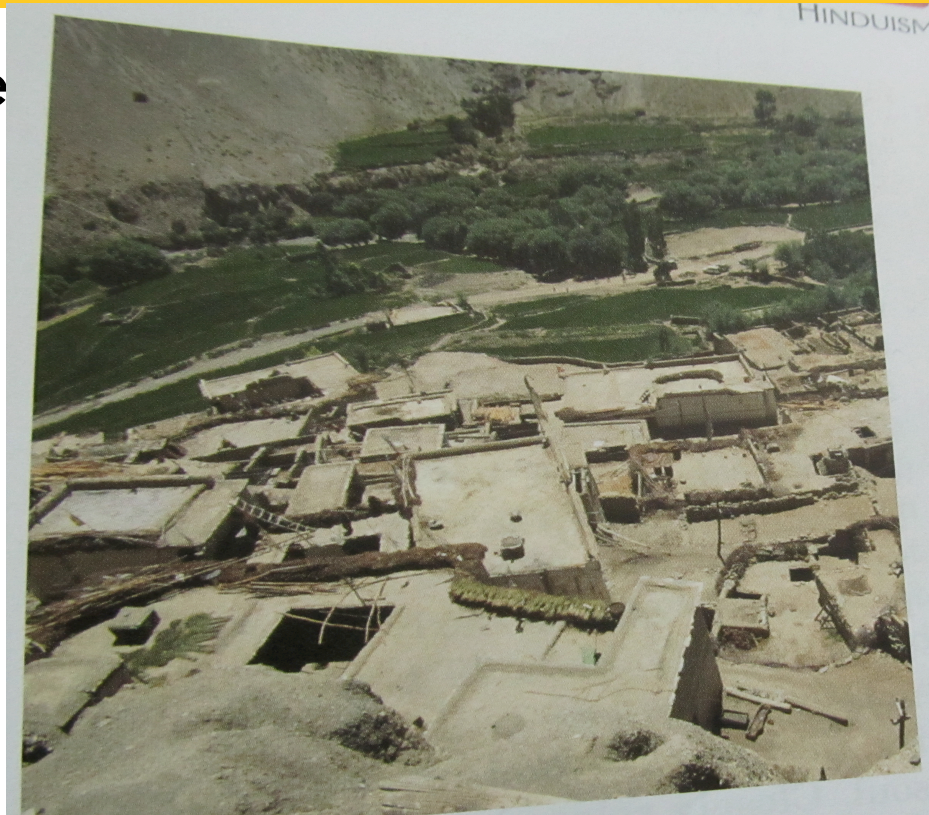
region of India through time, which might explain its diverse and complex nature. However, the foundations of

Origins- Indus Valley Civilization

- Earliest evidence of religious thought in India
- Along the banks of the Indus River
- 3000- 2500 BCE

Origins- Indus Valley Civilization

- Evidence shows that these people of this civilization were impressive builders and town planners



Origins- Indus Valley Civilization

- Cities that included central area for civic activities as well as large residential zones
- Some houses also contained a drainage sewer system with



Origins- Indus Valley Civilization

- Some buildings in Mohenjo-Daro have been identified as worship houses
- Archaeologists have uncovered that represent a mother goddess.
- May be early depictions of Parvati and Kali



that

Origins- Indus Valley Civilization

□ Also found Amulets, and thousands of flat seals



Origins- Indus Valley Civilization

- Some of the seals depict a man wearing a head-dress seated in a yoga like position, surrounded by animals
- SHIVA



Origins- Indus Valley Civilization

Also found fire altars and pits lined with bricks containing ashes and animal bones.

What does this tell us?



Origins- Indus Valley Civilization

- That this culture participated in religious activities like fire rituals and animal sacrifices



Origins

The Arrival of the Ayrans

Hinduism

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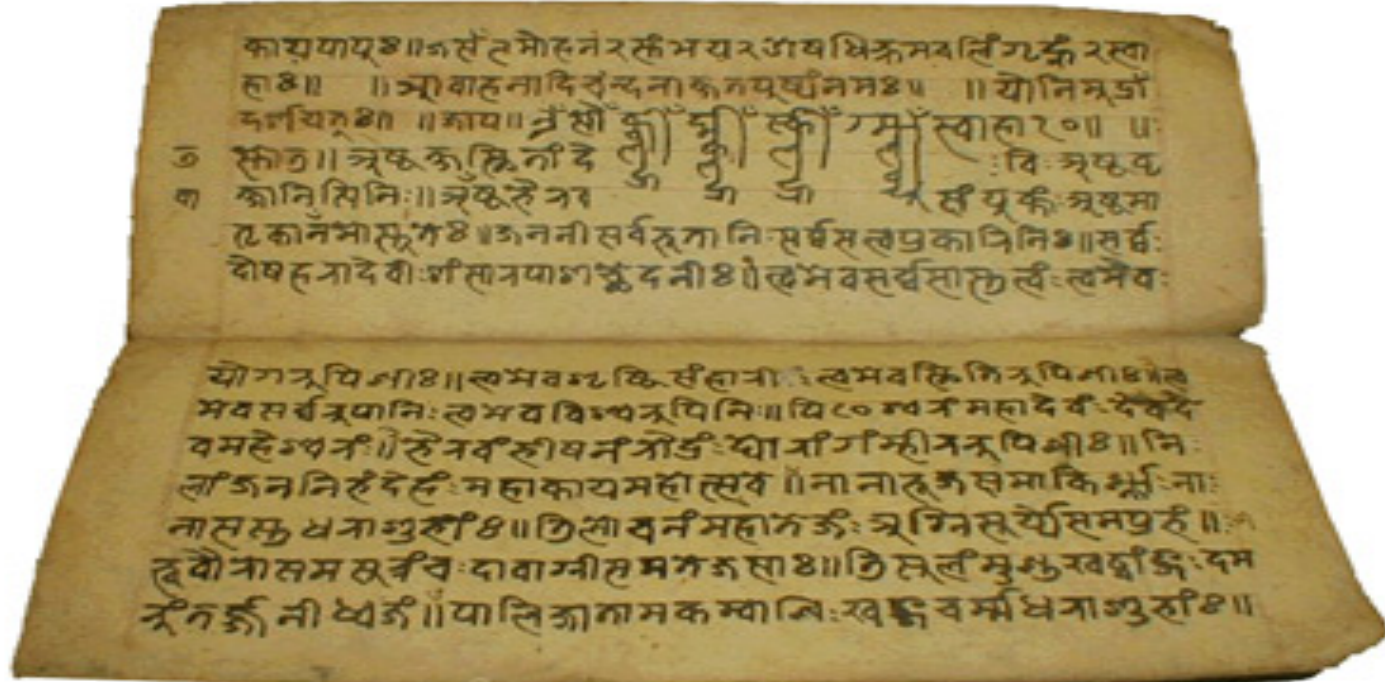
Origins- The Arrival of the Aryans

- 1500 BCE thousands migrated from the northwest to India
- They destroyed the Indus civilization
- They Aryans migrated to the Ganges River

Origins- The Arrival of the Aryans

- Aryan settlers created poems, and later texts on rituals and philosophy.
- Religion was embodied in a collection of hymns, ritual texts and philosophical texts called **Vedas**, which are considered Hinduism's earliest sacred writings

Origins- The Arrival of the Aryans



Origins- The Arrival of the Aryans

- Worshiped nature in the form of deities, or Gods
- They also worshiped fire, called **Agni**, and believed it was the link between the Gods and humans



Origins- The Arrival of the Aryans



Origins- The Arrival of the Aryans

- Worship and please these core of early



rituals to honor and deities formed the Hindu practices.

- The Upanishads (philosophical commentary that appears at the end of each Veda) combined this notion of :

Origins- The Arrival of the Aryans



With philosophical inquiry about
Atman



Human Soul

Origins- The Arrival of the Aryans

- Closely related to Vayu (God of Wind or air), the **Atman** was considered to be the breath of human life and became one of the fundamental principles of the Hindu philosophy.



Practice

- Check your understanding Pg 120 #'s 1-3